



# STUDENT ENROLLMENT PLAN 2024-2025

*The Student Enrollment Plan informs and guides registration and enrollment of students into The School District of Lee County.*

*Parent's Bill of Rights*

[https://www.leeschools.net/parent\\_portal/parents\\_bill\\_of\\_rights](https://www.leeschools.net/parent_portal/parents_bill_of_rights)

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## I. INTRODUCTION

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The School District of Lee County Student Enrollment Plan informs and guides the necessary components of enrolling students into the public schools of Lee County. The Plan's focus on offering parental choice reflects a belief in the educational benefits of providing a variety of options for enhancement in a student's learning while maintaining the District's focus on continuous improvement of student achievement.

- Each student has the opportunity to achieve his/her highest personal potential. The School District of Lee County is a strong and competitive school system.
- Each school in The School District of Lee County provides equitable services to meet the needs of the whole child and each school is academically, athletically, and programmatically competitive with other school options available within the District, county, surrounding counties, and across the State of Florida.
- The Student Enrollment Plan is subject to annual review, refinement, and Board approval.

Since the Fall of 2020, District Administrators have been working to develop a new student enrollment system. Throughout the process, the SDLC has been committed to better addressing system issues (student distribution, transportation, etc.) for the benefit of our students, families, and community. Beginning in 2023-2024, The School District of Lee County is implementing a Proximity Plan for the District elementary students. The Student Enrollment Plan for 2024-2025 is focused around reducing the size of the attendance zones. Also impacted will be the transportation system; bus routes will be shorter and there will be a reduction in the number of bus routes. Implementation will begin with the 2024-2025 school year at the **middle level and continue with the elementary level.**

## II. STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROCESS: ELEMENTARY

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### A. Open Enrollment / School Selection

The District's formal enrollment period (Student Open Enrollment) for the parents and guardians of students was modified for 2023-2024 with the implementation of the Elementary Proximity Plan. Elementary students remaining out of zone will continue to have no district transportation. School bus transportation will be provided to those students within the new proximity boundary for the student's residence.

Families participating in the Open Enrollment (incoming Kindergarten students, elementary level students new to the District, and those living outside of the new zone and

needing transportation) will rank the schools within the new Proximity Plan attendance zones. Students will only receive transportation for elementary schools within the residential choice proximity zone in which they reside. Families who require bus transportation will always be guaranteed an available seat at a school with capacity in their proximity zone. \*

Students desiring to remain in the current school of enrollment when that school is outside the new Proximity Plan map will be waiving transportation. The District will offer a concurrent window in which parents will make the decision to either remain in the current school of enrollment and waive bus transportation services (if living outside of their current school's proximity zone) or to enter the new Proximity Lottery. Families who do not make an enrollment decision by the end of the lottery period will be automatically entered into the new Proximity Lottery so that school bus transportation will be available to them.

The Sibling Preference (the ability to link younger siblings to older siblings at a school) will continue as an assignment factor in the lottery. Parents with an incoming Kindergarten student will be notified of enrollment with the sibling. This will occur after the Kindergarten pre-registration window closes.

In the event the current sibling selected the **continuation option** to remain in a school outside the residential proximity zone for the current school year with no transportation, the student may remain for the upcoming year. In the event an incoming sibling is enrolling for 2024-2025 the incoming student will be enrolled with sibling out of residential proximity zone if students have common address and common parent.

\*If there are not available seats within a proximity zone, then the student will be transported to a designated adjacent proximity zone.

The lottery process is used in situations in which the number of applicants for a school exceeds the available seats. The system first considers the preferences that a student has and then randomly processes applications when placing students.

Enrollments from the lottery are made to fill the capacity of the school according to the following preferences:

- ESE and special programs
- Sibling preference
- Proximity 1 (P1 – residence within two miles of school)
- Proximity 2 (PS – school most near the residence)
- Serious illness or death of custodial parent (HB 7029)
- Dependent child of active duty military personnel whose move is a result of military orders (HB7029)
- Relocated due to foster care placement in a different school zone (HB7029)

- A move due to court-ordered change in custody (HB7029)

**B. Enrollment Residential/Proximity Plan Zones: Elementary Schools**

Any student residing in any zone may request Sanibel Island, Pine Island or Estero Island/Fort Myers Beach. These schools will be identified as attractor schools (A). **District transportation is not provided.** Parent will mark the correct selection in the Proximity zone linked to residential address. The Bayshore Elementary phased transition to a K-8 school will commence in the 2024-2025 school year, beginning with the enrollment of the current 5th-grade class. Students currently in the 5th grade will be automatically enrolled at Bayshore for 6th grade in the academic year 2024-2025. The transition will progress, with the enrollment of 4th graders scheduled for the academic year 2025-2026. The option to choose Bayshore 6th-8th as a middle school will not be available within the designated middle school zone until August 2027.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone A</u></b></p> <p>Fort Myers Beach (A) Hector Cafferata Jr. Patriot Pine Island (A) Sanibel (K-8) (A) Skyline Trafalgar</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone B</u></b></p> <p>Caloosa Diplomat Fort Myers Beach (A) Hancock Creek Littleton Pine Island (A) Sanibel (K-8) (A) Tropic Isles</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone C</u></b></p> <p>Bayshore Fort Myers Beach (A) J. Colin North Fort Myers Academy of the Arts (K-8) Pine Island (A) Sanibel (K-8) (A)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone D</u></b></p> <p>Alva (K-8) Fort Myers Beach (A) James Stephens Manatee Orange River Pine Island (A) Riverhall Sanibel (K-8) (A) Tice</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone E</u></b></p> <p>Fort Myers Beach (A) Pine Island Sanibel (K-8) (A)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone F</u></b></p> <p>Cape Fort Myers Beach (A) Gulf Pelican Pine Island (A) Sanibel (K-8) (A)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone H</u></b></p> <p>Allen Park Edgewood Edison Park Fort Myers Beach (A) Franklin Park Orangewood Pine Island (A) Sanibel (K-8) (A)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone J</u></b></p> <p>Colonial Fort Myers Beach (A) Gateway Pine Island (A) Ray V. Pottorf Sanibel (K-8) (A) Treeline</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone K</u></b></p> <p>Fort Myers Beach (A) Harns Marsh Pine Island (A) Sanibel (K-8) (A) Sunshine Tortuga</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone L</u></b></p> <p>Amanecer  Fort Myers Beach (A)  G. Weaver Hipps  Lehigh  Mirror Lakes  Pine Island (A)  Sanibel (K-8) (A)  Veterans Park (K-8)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone N</u></b></p> <p>Fort Myers Beach (A)  Pine Island (A)  Sanibel (K-8)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone O</u></b></p> <p>Fort Myers Beach (A)  Heights  Rayma C. Page  Pine Island (A)  Sanibel (K-8) (A)  Tanglewood  Villas</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone Q</u></b></p> <p>Bonita Springs  Fort Myers Beach (A)  Pine Island (A)  Pinewoods  San Carlos  Sanibel (K-8) (A)  Spring Creek  Three Oaks</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Proximity Zone T</u></b></p> <p>Fort Myers Beach  Pine Island (A)  Sanibel (K-8) (A)</p>	

**III. KINDERGARTEN PRE-REGISTRATION/REGISTRATION AND NEW STUDENT REGISTRATION**

Parents are given the opportunity to pre-register in the fall for the upcoming school year for students that will be entering Kindergarten. Student must be 5 years old on or before September 1 to enroll. Registrations are entered through the parent portal in FOCUS. Documents needed to register include:

- Copy of Parent photo ID
- Home Language Survey form
- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Health Examination (physical) - The exam must be dated within 12 months prior to registration. Physical is required for Kindergarten registration.
- DH680-Florida Certificate of Immunization - Form can be obtained free by taking immunization record to the Lee County Health Department, 3920 Michigan Ave., Ft. Myers, FL. Appointment is required, so please call 239-461-6100.
- Social Security Card (optional)
- Custody Documents (if applicable)
- Proof of Address - Only ONE of the following documents are required (Driver's License are not accepted as proof of address):
  - Current Bill (electric bill, water bill, cable bill or any utility bill indicating service address)

- Signed Lease Agreement (statement from landlord) on their letterhead verifying occupancy. Statement must verify occupancy. \*Additional documentation may be required prior to registration or change of address.
- Homestead Exemption must be used when enrolling, if applicable.
- Building a Home - Mortgage Acceptance Letter including: name, loan number, property address and a letter from the builder including expected completion date. \*The completion date must be within 30 days of the student attending school. \*\*Documentation of substantial deposit may be submitted for mortgage acceptance letter.
- Buying a Home - Mortgage acceptance letter including: name, loan number, property address and closing date. \*The closing date must be within 30 days of the student attending school. \*\*Documentation of substantial deposit may be submitted for mortgage acceptance letter.
- Living with relatives or friends - A letter indicating family and names of children residing in the home, along with proof of address (one of the above) verifying the address.

These same documents are needed to register students NEW to the country or to the state of Florida or students coming from private school. All new and re-enrolling student registrations are to be uploaded through the FOCUS portal.

#### **IV. STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROCESS: MIDDLE**

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##### **A. Open Enrollment / School Selection**

The District's formal enrollment period for the parents and guardians of middle level students will be modified for 2024-2025 with the implementation of the new Proximity Plan for middle school. The proximity plan is focused on reducing the attendance zones for students. Reduction of the attendance zone will decrease the size of the subzones and reduce the time traveled on the bus routes.

Families participating in the middle school proximity plan (incoming 6th grade students, middle school students new to the District and those living outside of the new zone and needing transportation) will rank the schools within the Proximity Plan attendance zones. Students will receive transportation for middle schools within the residential choice proximity zone in which they reside. Families who require bus transportation will always be guaranteed an available seat at a school with capacity in their proximity zone.\*

Self-contained Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs/students will maintain current school of enrollment and district transportation provided.



Middle School Proximity Plan will impact student population and not individual school program. Offerings: Arts applications program will continue at the current sites: Bonita Springs Middle, Cypress Lake Middle, North Fort Myers Academy, Harns Marsh Middle, Oak Hammock Middle and Veterans Park Academy. Transportation will be provided only if school is within the student's Middle School Proximity Zone.

The sibling preference (the ability to link younger siblings to older siblings at a school) will continue as an assignment factor in the Proximity Plan. Incoming middle school student will receive enrollment with the sibling during lottery unless a new school choice application is submitted during Open Enrollment for a school different from the sibling's school of enrollment. Siblings link when there is a common address and a common parent. A sibling enrolled after the lottery is not guaranteed like school of enrollment.

In the event that a current middle school student is enrolled in a school outside the new Proximity Plan map, the parent may make the decision to waive transportation and use the Continuation Option to remain in the current school of enrollment, this form must be completed prior to the processing of the open enrollment lottery. Incoming 6th grade sibling will automatically link to older sibling to receive enrollment in a school out of proximity. Students must enter the lottery for a school within the proximity plan attendance zone to continue to receive bus transportation services.

\*If there are not available seats within a proximity zone, then the student will be transported to a designated adjacent proximity zone.

The lottery process is used in situations in which the number of applicants for a school exceeds the available seats. The system first considers the preferences that a student has and then randomly processes applications when placing students.

Enrollments from the lottery are made to fill the capacity of the school according to the following preferences:

- Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and programs
- Sibling preference
- Proximity 1 (P1 - residence within two miles of school)
- Proximity 2 (P2 - the school most near the residence.)
- Serious illness or death of custodial parent (House Bill 7029)
- Dependent child of active-duty military personnel whose move is a result of military orders (House Bill 7029)
- Relocated due to foster care placement in a different school zone (House Bill 7029)
- A move due to court-ordered change in custody (House Bill 7029)

**B. Enrollment Residential/Proximity Plan Zones: Middle Schools**

Any student residing in any zone may request The Sanibel School. This school will be identified as attractor school (A). **District transportation is not provided.** Parent will mark the correct selection in the Proximity zone linked to residential address. The Bayshore Elementary phased transition to a K-8 school will commence in the 2024-2025 school year, beginning with the enrollment of the current 5th-grade class. Students currently in the 5th grade will be automatically enrolled at Bayshore for 6th grade in the academic year 2024-2025. The transition will progress, with the enrollment of 4th graders scheduled for the academic year 2025-2026. The option to choose Bayshore 6th-8th as a middle school will not be available within the designated middle school zone until August 2027.

**Proposed Proximity Plan Zones: Middle Schools**

<p><b><u>Proximity Zone AA</u></b>                  Challenger Middle                  Mariner Middle                  Sanibel (K-8)</p>	<p><b><u>Proximity Zone BB</u></b>                  Gulf Middle                  Sanibel (K-8)                  Trafalgar Middle</p>	<p><b><u>Proximity Zone CC</u></b>                  Caloosa Middle                  Diplomat Middle                  North Fort Myers Academy                  Sanibel (K-8)</p>
<p><b><u>Proximity Zone D/DD</u></b>                  Alva (K-8)                  Sanibel (K-8)</p>	<p><b><u>Proximity Zone EE</u></b>                  Fort Myers Middle                  P.L. Dunbar Middle                  The Sanibel School</p>	<p><b><u>Proximity Zone MM</u></b>                  Cypress Lake Middle                  Lexington Middle                  Sanibel (K-8)</p>
<p><b><u>Proximity Zone GG</u></b>                  Bonita Springs Middle                  Sanibel (K-8)                  Three Oaks Middle</p>	<p><b><u>Proximity Zone HH</u></b>                  Lehigh Acres Middle                  Lemuel Teal Middle                  Sanibel (K-8)                  Veterans Park Academy</p>	<p><b><u>Proximity Zone JJ</u></b>                  Harns Marsh Middle                  Oak Hammock Middle                  Sanibel (K-8)                  Varsity Lakes Middle</p>
<p><b><u>Proximity Zone LL</u></b>                  Sanibel (K-8)</p>		

**V. STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROCESS: HIGH**

**A. Open Enrollment / School Selection**

The Open Enrollment period allows students that are entering High school and students who are new or re-enrolling to the District or students that have changed residential/choice zones or sub-zones to submit school choice applications. Participation in the enrollment process by students at other grade levels is optional, but is limited to two schools of enrollment per level (middle and high). Parents and guardians submit their children’s applications during the specified

period through their FOCUS Parent Portal. Parents needing assistance with the creation of the FOCUS Parent Portal should contact their child's school. Registration and enrollment are completed through the FOCUS portal.

Parents may submit the school choice application in FOCUS **ANY DAY** during the advertised Open Enrollment period. Placements are made at the **end** of the enrollment period. Entering an application on the first day does **NOT** impact a parent's guarantee of a particular school. Parents and guardians will be notified of their school after the lottery is run at the end of the enrollment period through FOCUS.

At the time when school choice application is entered, families are required to rank, in preference order, all of the available schools in their residential/choice zone. Zone attractor programs or multi-zone attractor programs may also be ranked. The District makes every attempt to accommodate parental preferences using the factors established in this policy, as described below.

## **B. Enrollment Residential/Proximity Plan Zones, Sub-Zones and Programs: High Schools**

As explained more fully below, the plan divides the District into three Residential/Choice Zones and each of these three zones is further divided into three sub-zones for High School students. This makes a total of nine areas, excluding the three barrier islands. Because of the strong community concern about equity, the District established funding priorities for capital improvement projects to maintain equivalency of facilities among the Residential/Choice Zones and sub-zones, as well as, maintaining adequate capacity for students residing within each zone and sub-zone.

### **1. Residential Choice Proximity Zones**

In order to provide **all** parents and guardians with a significant number of school options closer to their homes and to allow for diverse school enrollments, the plan divides the District into three large, contiguous, geographic regions or residential/choice zones.

The West Zone is generally the portion of Lee County located west and north of the Caloosahatchee River. The East Zone is generally east of Interstate 75 and north of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The South Zone is generally south of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and the Caloosahatchee River.

Existing and planned transportation networks, topographical constraints, available school capacity at each level, and student demographic characteristics were considered in developing the Residential Choice Proximity Zone boundaries. Community cohesiveness and the proximity of schools to concentrated student populations also were considerations in the formation of the zones. The zone boundaries maximize the availability of nearby schools for

all families in the District and minimize the need for cross-zone and cross-county transportation networks.

## **2. Sub-Zones**

In response to the desire of Lee County residents for increased opportunities to attend schools closer to their homes and to help the District manage transportation more effectively, the plan relies on sub-zones within each of the three Residential/Choice Zones. This increases the opportunity for students to attend schools closer to their homes and helps to reduce transportation costs.

Each of the three zones is divided into three sub-zones. Under the school selection procedures discussed further in this plan, parents or guardians select from among the schools in the sub-zone in which he or she resides and in any contiguous sub-zone within the same zone. In the event all schools at the student's level in the student's sub-zone and contiguous sub-zone are over capacity, the Superintendent (or his designee) may authorize enrollments to a noncontiguous sub-zone within the zone.

## **3. Advanced Programs and Zone Attractor Programs**

The plan provides for The District to offer advanced educational programs in the Arts, International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, and FGCU Collegiate. These advanced programs continue to have admissions or eligibility criteria. Parents and guardians of students applying to advanced programs must comply with the application procedures of this plan, and students must meet the application requirements for the selected program.

Advanced Programs available for high school students include the FGCU Collegiate at Bonita Springs High and Gateway High; the International Baccalaureate Programs at Cape Coral High, Dunbar High, Fort Myers High, and Riverdale High; Cambridge Programs at Bonita Springs High, Cypress Lake High, East Lee County High, Estero High, Gateway High, Ida S. Baker High, Island Coast High, Lehigh Senior High, Mariner High, North Fort Myers High and South Fort Myers High; Arts at Cypress Lake High, Lehigh Senior High, and North Fort Myers High.

Parents and guardians of students residing in Lee County must submit an enrollment application for these advanced high school programs during the designated annual open enrollment period mid-January until February. Only "new" students to the District are permitted to apply and enroll in a special high school or middle school program after the open application period has ended. By definition, a "new" student to the District is one that moves to Lee County from another Florida county, from outside the State of Florida, or from outside the country. Students enrolling from another zone or subzone within the District are not considered "new" students. Additionally, students enrolling from a private school, virtual program, charter school and/or homeschooled in Lee County are not considered "new"

students for purposes of the plan. Students that are enrolled in a school after the Open Enrollment period may be considered for the school's Advanced Program if the student meets the requirements.

High schools offer career academies that students and parents are encouraged to review. In a limited number of sub-zones, the District has attractor schools which offer a specific program that the parent may select.

Under the Plan, the District replicates and expands educational programs by following a district process to ensure that all programs meet the same high standards of quality and instructional value. Current information is available on the District website [www.leeschools.net](http://www.leeschools.net).

## **VI. FACTORS AFFECTING INITIAL SCHOOL OF ENROLLMENT**

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In addition to parental preference, the primary factor relied upon by the plan, other factors may impact the enrollment of students to schools.

### **A. Instructional Capacity**

Prior to making student enrollments for each school year, the Superintendent (or designee) determines the capacity of each school. The capacity determination for any school will include class size requirements, as required by Florida Constitution and state law. The capacity determination may also include seats set aside for ESE, or other specialized programs.

### **B. Sibling Preference**

Parents may choose to request their younger child(ren) be enrolled in the same school by entering a school choice application in FOCUS ranking the school selections in the same order. Siblings are defined as children **residing at the same address and having the same guardians**.

- Parents with siblings currently enrolled in The School District of Lee County will receive notification prior to the first enrollment period indicating that their siblings are enrolled in the same school for the upcoming school year. There is no need for the parent to complete a school choice application in FOCUS, unless the parent is desiring to change the school of enrollment.
- **Parents are responsible to ensure siblings connect via parents and address. Parents need to check their Focus Parent Portal to ensure addresses are current.**
- The District will attempt to give parents with siblings enrolling **after** the first application period priority in the lottery process; however, if capacity does not exist, the parent will need to decide to accept an enrollment to a different school for the incoming student.

### **C. Proximity Preferences - Proximity 1, Proximity 2**

Each Residential Choice Proximity Zone school has a "Safe-Walk Zone" (a two-mile range per Florida Statute) delineated by the District. The size of the Safe-Walk Zone varies according to (1) Residential/Choice Zone boundaries, (2) the reasonable walking distance limit defined by Florida Statute, and (3) safe walking conditions. Students who reside within the Safe-Walk Zone-proximity preference 1 (P1) and select that school, are given a preference in the student enrollment process over students who live outside the P1 Safe-Walk Zone, subject to higher ranked priorities and capacity. **High Schools have only P1** as a proximity preference. This is due to high schools offering specific programs that may attract students from multiple subzones within the zone. Students may choose to have longer travel times on the bus at the high school level to meet their educational needs.

Proximity preference 2 (P2) is implemented for students applying for grades K through 8. This provides a second level of proximity preference from the end of the P1 (within 2 miles) area reaching up to approximately 5 miles or the school that is identified as the school most near the residence. The distance for the P2 school may exceed 5 miles.

### **D. Zone Attractor Programs**

Requests for zone attractor programs (high school and elementary) are processed and enrollments are made in accordance with established policies and practices, subject to the student enrollment lottery, instructional capacity and applicable preferences. A zone attractor program choice is processed first. If a student is enrolled to a zone attractor program school, his or her application for zone schools will not be processed. Students not receiving an enrollment to the requested zone attractor program school will have their name placed in the eligibility pool for possible transfer to their first-choice zone attractor program school.

### **E. Lottery**

A lottery process is used in situations in which the number of applicants for a school exceeds the available seats. The system first considers the preferences that any student has and then randomly processes applications when placing students.

Enrollments from the lottery are made to fill the capacity of the school according to the following preferences:

- Zone attractor programs (*unique curriculum program(s) specific to a school/zone*)
- ESE and special programs
- Sibling preference
- Proximity 1 (P1)
- Sibling guarantee
- Proximity 2 (P2) (elementary and middle school)

- Serious illness or death of custodial parent (HB 7029)
- Dependent child of active-duty military personnel whose move is a result of military orders (HB7029)
- Relocated due to foster care placement in a different school zone (HB7029)
- A move due to court-ordered change in custody (HB7029)

## **F. Continuation Opportunities**

Under the plan, students have the option to continue in their current schools until they complete the highest grade offered at that school. Such “continuity” includes students at zone attractor programs. Siblings of students enrolled at schools transitioning from one zone to another, from one sub-zone to another are **NOT** permitted to enroll at schools that are not in their Residential/Choice Zones. Transportation is **NOT** guaranteed under the “continuation” enrollment option. **Continuation opportunity may be revoked due to discipline matters, attendance/tardies and academic issues.**

Students who move from one Residential/Choice Zone to another within the District are treated as a student new to the District and are required to choose from among the schools in their new Residential/Choice Zone in accordance with the student enrollment process outlined in the plan. Students who move to a different Residential/Choice Zone after enrollment is complete have the option to request to remain in their school of enrollment for the remainder of the academic school year. Parents or guardians apply for and receive a moving waiver for temporary (current school year) continuation of enrollment as described herein. Transportation for such students is provided only if transportation routes exist and seats are available on the bus. **Moving waivers may be revoked due to discipline matters, attendance/tardiness, and academic issues.**

A change of residence within a Residential/Choice Zone has no impact on student enrollment; however, the parent or guardian must provide notification of the residential address change to the school where the student is enrolled so that student transportation may be arranged. Students who move from one sub-zone to another within a Residential/Choice Zone may remain in their current school of enrollment to the highest grade available. If they move to a sub-zone in which they would otherwise be ineligible to attend their current school, the District only provides transportation if routes exist and seats are available on the bus.

## **G. New and Re-Enrollment in FOCUS Portal**

Enrollments for students new to the District or students re-enrolling to The School District of Lee County are processed on a first-come, first-serve basis after the Open Enrollment application period in order to enroll students to schools as quickly as possible. The District enrolls these students to schools on the day their initial application is completed. Students that are currently

enrolled in The School District of Lee County and wish to submit a new school choice application after Open Enrollment may enter a new application through the FOCUS portal. **When a NEW application is submitted, the student is giving up their seat at their current school of enrollment due to capacity.** Many schools throughout the District, especially those highly selected and in densely populated areas could reach capacity as outcome of the Open Enrollment lottery process.

## VII. CHANGING SCHOOLS / SECOND SEMESTER TRANSFERS & WAIVERS

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### A. Enrollment Application Results

Every effort is made to accommodate the choices of parents or guardians within the parameter of school capacity and preferences discussed above. Enrollments are made in accordance with this system until all students are enrolled or until no seats remain at the school and grade level.

Students not receiving their first-choice school may continue to submit choice applications in Focus through July 31 for a possible new school. Each attempt to select a new school is giving up the current school of enrollment. **There is no eligibility pool/waitlist for 2024-2025.**

After July 31st, there is no movement of students. Students who have a school of enrollment remain at current school. The Second Semester transfer process is the next opportunity to request a different school of enrollment.

### B. Second Semester Transfer

In addition to Open Enrollment, the District has once scheduled opportunity for students in grades KG through 11 to apply for a second semester transfer. Second Semester Transfer request will be submitted through the Focus parent portal. Approval is dependent on seat availability.

Parents or guardians may request **one** transfer for their child to attend another school in their residential/choice proximity zone **one** time during each of the three levels (elementary, middle and high) by reapplying for a second semester transfer and entering the school choice application through FOCUS. Such transfers are subject to the same factors affecting initial school enrollments. **A student's last opportunity for the one transfer is at the end of the first semester of his or her eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) grade year.** Absence of extenuating circumstances, only **one** such transfer is permitted during these levels. The District is focused on stabilization, continuity, and each student's academic success.



## C. Waivers

There are **seven** recognized grounds for waivers allowing permanent enrollments that are not subject to the enrollment factors of the plan:

- Employee Waiver
- Cross Zone Waiver (reviewed only one time – decision is final)
- Medical Waiver
- Moving Waiver
- Advanced Program Exit Waiver
- High School Career Academy Waiver
- Hardship Waiver

**Parents must provide their own transportation if a waiver is approved unless transportation is already set up and there are seats available on the bus.**

### 1. Employee Waiver In-County / Out-County

An employee may request a waiver when he or she works at a school on a **full-time** basis, as defined by the employment contract, and wants his/her child to attend the school the employee is staffed at or the school most near with seat availability. An employee waiver may be renewed annually for as long as the employee maintains full-time employment status at that school.

### 2. Cross Zone Waiver

A cross zone waiver may be granted when extenuating circumstances, which can be documented, exists for a family and those circumstances necessitate the placement of a student at a school in a different zone, subzone or proximity enrollment zone. Per Board policy 5120, cross zone waivers are reviewed one time. **The deadline for submitting a Cross Zone Waiver for the upcoming school year is July 31<sup>st</sup>. Cross zone waiver approval is contingent on available seats at requested school.**

### 3. Medical Waiver

A parent may submit a Medical Waiver Application when extenuating medical circumstances exist for the **student**. A letter from a parent, along with documentation from a physician must accompany request. Documentation should include medical condition, date of diagnosis, severity of condition, frequency of condition, hospitalizations, medication required, and additional information or procedure to be performed. Medical waivers are reviewed by the Health Services team.

#### **4. Moving Waiver**

In the interest of promoting student enrollment stability, the District may approve a temporary student enrollment moving waiver. Such a waiver shall expire at the end of the academic year in which it is requested.

Students who move to a different choice zone in the District following enrollment, may remain in their school of enrollment for the remainder of the academic school year if their parents or guardians apply for and receive a waiver for temporary continuation of enrollment. The parents or guardians must apply for permanent school enrollment in the new zone under the school selection and student enrollment process during the next appropriate registration period.

The District may also grant a waiver in the form of a temporary reenrollment to a school in another residential choice proximity zone if it can be assured, to the satisfaction of the Executive Director of Student Enrollment/designee, that the student's residence will change to the new zone in the first semester of the academic year and that it is in the best interest of the child to begin and complete the school year in the new zone of residence.

Parents or guardians shall apply for change of residence waivers at the Student Enrollment Office. Transportation for students under either of these waivers may be provided if transportation routes exist and if seats are available on the bus.

A student who has attended a high school for four consecutive semesters and moves to a different zone may request a waiver. He/she is eligible for a High School waiver in order to stay at that school until graduation

#### **5. Advanced Program Exit Waiver**

Advanced program exit waivers may also be granted for those students who have not remained in the Arts, International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, FGCU Collegiate for four consecutive semesters and want to leave the program but remain at the same school of enrollment. School Principal and Coordinator of Program will review waiver and approve prior to submittal to the Student Enrollment Department.

#### **6. High School Career Academy Waiver**

Career Academy waivers may be granted for those students requesting enrollment in a high school with a particular academy of interest. Request will be received by The Student Enrollment Department and reviewed by the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department and Academic Services staff. High School Career Academy waivers for the upcoming school year are due by May 1st.

## 7. Hardship Waiver

A waiver may be granted when extenuating circumstances, which can be documented, exist for a family and those circumstances necessitate the placement of a student at a different school than the school enrolled. An older sibling requesting a transfer to younger sibling's school of enrollment is not considered a hardship. Hardship waivers receive one review. **The deadline for submitting a hardship waiver is July 31<sup>st</sup>, unless an extenuating circumstance exists.**

## VIII. FLORIDA HOUSE BILL 7029 ENROLLMENT and TRANSFERS

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In addition to the opportunities for school enrollment addressed in other provisions of this plan, students residing in other school districts in the state of Florida, who are not subject to suspension or expulsion, may exercise their right under Florida House Bill 7029, to seek enrollment to a school in the Lee County School District which has not reached capacity. Such school enrollments shall be made according to the following process. Other provisions of the plan do not apply to enrollment under this section unless specifically stated.

### A. Applications

Applications will be accepted during a two-week period beginning four weeks prior to the start of the following school year. A lottery will be conducted at the end of the two weeks to determine available capacity based on the following lottery preferences (b through e carry the same weight):

- Serious illness or death of custodial Parent
- Dependent child of an active duty military personnel whose move is a result of military orders
- Relocated due to foster care placement in a different school zone
- A move due to court-ordered change in custody

### B. Capacity

School capacity for purposes of Florida House Bill 7029 under this section is defined as 90% of program capacity to meet growth in five years based on projections. The capacity of each school in the District and a separate listing of schools that have not reached capacity is maintained on the District website. If the District website shows capacity is available at a school in which the student is seeking to enroll, the parent must contact the student enrollment office to determine whether the available seat(s) are of the grade and service delivery model appropriate to serve the student. School enrollment of students pursuant to this provision is based on the availability of a

seat appropriate to meet the student’s educational needs. If the student’s needs change and the seat is no longer appropriate to serve the student, the parent must return to the Student Enrollment office to determine if an appropriate seat is available. If there is no seat available in the school that is appropriate to serve the student, the student will be required to return to the district of residence to seek enrollment at a school with services needed to serve the student appropriately.

**C. Continuity**

Students will be grandfathered to the highest level of school enrolled.

**D. Transportation**

Transportation is not provided to students enrolled to a district school under this section.

**E. Limitations**

School transfer under this provision is not permitted.

**F. Preferences**

The preferences addressed in section II.A. of The Student Enrollment Plan, including proximity and sibling preferences do not apply to students residing outside of the Lee County School District enrolled or transferred under this section.

**G. Revocation**

The enrollment or transfer of a student to a Lee County District school under this section shall be revoked: 1) immediately, if the student receives an expulsion or out of school suspension, and 2) at the semester break, if the student’s attendance is insufficient to meet educational needs as determined in the sole judgment of the school principal.

**H. Waivers**

School enrollment waivers addressed in section VI.C of the plan are not available to students seeking enrollment or transfer under this section.

## **IX. STUDENT ENROLLMENT OFFICE INFORMATION**

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The District Student Enrollment Office is located in the Lee County Public Education Center at 2855 Colonial Blvd., in Fort Myers. Public office hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM by appointment using the QLESS scheduling application. The Student Enrollment Office follows the District calendar. If the District is closed, Student Enrollment is closed.

- Registration and enrollments/re-enrollments are submitted through the Focus portal.
- Office visits are scheduled through the QLESS application.
- Parents and guardians may email questions regarding registration and enrollment to [studentenrollment@leeschools.net](mailto:studentenrollment@leeschools.net). Please include your child's full name and date of birth.

**School District of Lee County**  
**Student Enrollment Office**  
**2855 Colonial Blvd.**  
**Fort Myers, FL 33966**  
[studentenrollment@leeschools.net](mailto:studentenrollment@leeschools.net)